

REMARKS

The claims now pending in the application are Claims 1 to 9, the independent claims being Claims 1, 7, 8 and 9. Claims 1, 7 and 8 have been amended herein. Claim 9 is newly presented herein.

Applicant is in receipt of a Notice of Allowance and Notice of Allowability dated June 2, 2004, in which all prior pending Claims 1 to 8 were allowed. In reviewing the allowed claims, Applicant noted several minor discrepancies between the proposed claim amendments discussed with the Examiner in a telephonic interviews on May 25 and 26, 2004, and a minor/formal discrepancy between certain language in the preamble of each independent claim and the amended language in the body of such claims. In informal discussions with the Examiner after Allowance, it was agreed that Applicant would correct such discrepancies by filing an RCE and Preliminary Amendment.

Applicant submits that amended independent Claims 1, 7 and 8 remain allowable for the reasons previously set forth in the present application.

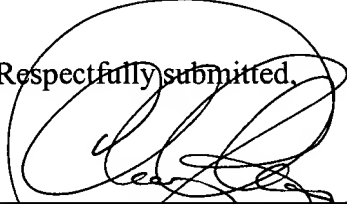
Claims 2 to 6 depend from Claim 1 and are believed to remain allowable for the same reasons.

Newly presented independent Claim 9 recites features that parallel the features recited in Claim 1, in non-means-plus-function format. Applicant submits that Claim 9 is allowable over the prior art, and is in condition for allowance.

Applicant submits that this application is in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowance respectfully is requested.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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